

April 10, 2003

## **REVIEW OF BLANKET PURCHASE AGREEMENTS (BPAS) FOR MULTI-VISN OR VISN GROUPS**

**1. PURPOSE:** This Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Directive defines the policy and procedures for identifying and negotiating Blanket Purchase Agreements (BPAs).

### **2. BACKGROUND**

a. The Procurement Reform Task Force recommendations state that multi-Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN), VISN, or local groups who identify potential benefits of establishing a BPA notify the VA's National Acquisition Center (NAC) so that the NAC can identify whether or not potential exists for a National BPA; negotiate on behalf of the VISN, multi-VISN, or local group; or provide recommendations on a negotiation strategy.

b. The Procurement Reform Task Force recommendations concluded that tiered pricing, BPAs and other favorable terms associated with Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) awards can improve procurement efficiencies and reduce costs.

**3. POLICY:** It is VHA policy that multi-VISNs, VISNs, and local groups who identify potential benefits of a BPA must notify the NAC.

### **4. ACTION**

a. **NAC.** The NAC is responsible for:

(1) Identifying whether or not the potential exists for a National BPA, and:

(a) Negotiating on behalf of the VISN, multi-VISN, or local group; or

(b) Providing recommendations on a negotiation strategy.

(2) Aggressively pursuing tiered-pricing and other favorable pricing terms in Federal Supply Schedule (FSS) contracts as well as BPAs against FSS contracts to the maximum extent practical.

(3) Oversight on the BPA and/or other consolidated contracting initiative review process. A NAC representative must log the proposed BPA into a database for tracking purposes.

b. **Process**

(1) Contract specialists from the National Contract Service and Federal Supply Schedule Service will work together to review the document for technical sufficiency. Acquisition Assistance and the Office of General Counsel at the NAC must also review the document.

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(2) The NAC must inform the Chief Logistics Office of the proposed BPA.

(a) If the proposal is to be used for National Standardization, the Chief Logistics Office, working with Patient Care Services (PCS), forms a user group and work begins as outlined in Directive and Handbook 1761.1, Standardization of Supplies and Equipment Procedures.

(b) PCS Program Officials are responsible for identifying field clinical staff to serve as the user group members.

(c) The NAC staff performs the contracting function (BPA or consolidated contracting initiative) when the Logistics Office indicates the desire for national standardization. **NOTE:** *It is recognized that in some cases the volume of needs within the VHA system may require the need for multiple vendor awards.*

(3) If the proposal is determined to be a VISN or multi-VISN initiative, the NAC will either negotiate an agreement on behalf of the VISN or multi-VISN or provide assistance to that effect so that the local group may proceed with establishing a BPA at the local level. NAC staff then provides the VISN with the awarded BPA or forwards the proposal back to the VISN office that originated the request for contracting action with comments and/or recommendations.

**NOTE:** *The process from local or VISN proposal to determination of National Standardization or determination of a local initiative should take no longer than 15 days.*

**5. REFERENCES:** Department of Veterans Affairs Procurement Reform Task Force Report, dated May 2002.

**6. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** The Chief Logistics Office, VHA Central Office, and the Executive Director, National Acquisition Center, Office of Acquisition and Materiel Management are responsible for the contents of this Directive. Questions may be referred to 202-273-8308.

**7. RECISSIONS:** None. This VHA Directive expires April 30, 2008.

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